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# SONGS AND LYRICS

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BY

HENLEY DALE

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I

## ERRATA

Page 65 line 10 *for* "life" *read* "bliss"
,, 67 line 12 *omit* "," after "feet"
,, 69 line 6 *for* "castaways," *read* "castaways;"
,, 88 line 5 *for* "Grinding" *read* "Working"
,, 100 line 2 *for* "or" larches *read* "of" larches
,, 131 line 10 *add* "," after "shell"
,, 133 line 2 *for* "balms" *read* "gums"
,, 133 in lines 8 and 14 *for* "Thee" and "Thou" *read* "thee" and "thou"
,, 133 line 9 *for* "Then we descend into the world again" *read* "To feel the world close round us hour by hour"
,, 133 line 10 *for* "clamours" *read* "clamour"

The white lilies move.
What censers are shaken!
What dew-bells are tost!
What joys reawaken!
What sorrows are lost!
Zephyr, Zephyr, my love.

## AURORA TO ZEPHYR

I COME, I am tracing
  Thy path from afar,
The moon outfacing,
  And morning star.
Look, look, I am leaving,
  The pine-covered height
For the valley, and cleaving
  A pathway of light
    To Zephyr my love.

Thou hast set the bough swinging
  In garden and grove,
To the voice of thy singing
  The white lilies move.
What censers are shaken!
  What dew-bells are tost!
What joys reawaken!
  What sorrows are lost!
    Zephyr, Zephyr, my love.

Our rapture of meeting
  All hasten to share,
Our first kiss of greeting
  Will thrill through the air:
Come, the rose-belted
  Clouds fly apace,
All heaven is melted
  In our embrace.
    Zephyr, Zephyr, my love.

## FLOWERS THAT SPRING FROM STEMS OF THOUGHT

FLOWERS that spring from stems of thought,
  Hope and joy diffusing,
By what magic are you wrought
  Out of sombre musing?

Wherefore into sudden bloom
  Do you shoot and cluster,
Filling meditation's room
  With unwonted lustre?

What has chanced, what changed, what wins
  This sweet salutation?
Is it thus the Muse begins
  Some divine dictation?

Is it what the linnet knows?
  Is it Nature's gladness?
Or some hope that brighter grows
  From the dews of sadness?

Into some new field of space
  Has our planet slanted,
From its evil-haunted ways
  By new stars enchanted?

## SPRING SONG

Breath of Spring, what fitful numbers
  Move in step with thine?
What desire that in me slumbers
  Owns thy call divine?

Birds, enlist me in your quire,
  Stream, and tasselled tree,
Sunny leaf, and bud of fire,
  You our audience be.

Spring, I catch thy quick pulsation,
  Words and phrases throng,
But thy careless exultation
  Beats not in my song.

## DISCOVERED

Dearer than the tranquil joy of dream,
  Fairer than the break of day thou art,
In thy movements and thine eyes' still beam
  Dwells a charm of power to sway the heart.

In what web of magic art thou wound?
  To what measure does thy spirit move?
Art thou in some subtle sorrow bound?
  Dost thou stand within the reach of love?

## A BURDEN OF SPRING

DEAD as falls the dead leaf
  Falls day on day,
On peach-bloom and apple-bloom
  And the white thorn of May.
Did the trees in Eden
  Their blossoms renew
When the pair were exiled
  For whom they blew?

Nightingale, thou wanton,
  With thy pretty tune
Hast my love enchanted,
  To wander 'neath the moon.
Through wild-wood, through waste-land
  He stumbles in fear,
Calls my name at midnight
  By the silver mere.

Moor-hen and marish-fowl
  Hear him when he calls,
I hear, but when I answer
  My voice no more enthrals;
And while I stand and listen
  Moments grow to years,
Weep, misty twilight,
  Weep my tears.

## EVE'S SONG

SWART Night and sweet Day,
Together wont to play
In the archway of the Dawn,
Veil and shadow withdrawn
And cast upon the stars:
What is it now that mars
Your entertainment free,
That ye no more rejoice
To hear each other's voice
Of golden amity?
One vexed with evil dreams,
And one reluctant seems
To show her burning face.
Do you share in our disgrace?

## BOY AND GIRL

I SAID "Good-bye, I am gone!"
  She looked up wistfully:
"Tarry but over another dawn,
  To-morrow say Good-bye."
    Alas! hours pass!

I went on the morrow and bade
  Good-bye to my love alone;
She eyed me coldly and said
  "We thought you already gone."
    Ah! well, farewell!

I speed through the avenue now,
  But the rooks, who are never alone,
Are calling from bough to bough
  "We thought him already gone."
    Gone! Gone! already gone!

There is only the boy at the gate;
  I am sad, I know not why;
I will give him a piece of silver
  To bid me a kind good-bye.
    Alas! hours pass!

## "O HOURS OF TRANQUIL MUSING"

O Hours of tranquil musing
When I was seizing, losing,
  Some charm of woven rhyme,
And mid forms of fancy choosing
The fairest, none refusing
  That would run in tune and time.

Now fixed to one impression,
With all my wits in session
  Over a look or word:
One theme in full possession,
And with a fine discretion
  To all the rest preferred.

O innocent idle pleasure
In Nature's golden leisure,
  Of your loss shall I complain?
When with your toys I measure
My rich, new-quarried treasure,
  To regret you shall I feign?

## GARDENER, HAVE YOU SEEN A ROSE?

GARDENER, have you seen a rose
  Parti-coloured, newly blown,
Where midsummer winds disclose
  All the pastimes they have known?
One her bosom bore to-day,
See it is not cast away.

Would you know it? 'Tis a scroll
  Vermeil-tinct, with edges white,
From whose leaves you might unroll
  Wisdom filled with love's delight;
Ask not what it was before,
Now 'tis one her bosom bore.

## THE CORNFIELD

LOVE I spied one summer morn,
No higher than the poppy stand
Tip-toe,
And all aglow,
Pouting his lips to blow
The gossamer over the yellow-headed corn;
While he whistled to the breeze
To bear it to the seas,
Where Venus his mother was born,
"You are light, so away,
You are fickle and free,
All of your sort are company;
Are you for sport?
Then to my mother's court,
Go and dance with the spray,"
Said Love, and he lay
With his curls down again in the corn.

## WHAT GIVEST THOU ME IN PASSING?

WHAT givest thou me in passing?
  Thy beauty? Be not proud;
For me the wave is glassing
  Blue heaven without a cloud.

What light on me is breaking?
  Thy smile? Be not so coy,
Round me to spring awaking
  Earth laughs and leaps for joy.

## ADIEU

Art thou again on the wing
  Southward, over the snows,
Sweet swallow that made our spring?
  Wilt thou now our summer close?
Over the stream, and abroad in the air,
  A dead leaf is whirling,
And under my foot is the rose.

## FIRST LOVE

*Penzance.*

We come together idly,
  Idly the vessel dips,
Scarce does a word of greeting
  Find breath to pass my lips.

A sidelong glance I venture,
  And a random word I speak,
When a sudden smile indenteth
  The fairness of her cheek.

Then as if in some strange fashion
  We both had heard good news,
A babble of talk and laughter
  At I know not what ensues.

As when in a town beleaguered,
  That looks famine in the face,
At dead of night a trooper
  Shouts in the market place:

"Good news! Good news!" Each burgher
  Hastes to unbar his door,
The women behind him cluster,
  And into the street they pour;

Plying question after question,
  For the answer brings fresh delight;—
So with us, whate'er we hazard,
  Is miraculously right.

And within me a voice repeateth
  Can it be true? Time slips,
She is called. I linger idly,
  Idly the vessel dips.

## THE FIRST QUARREL

Bend and bow, all-waving flow,
Falling, rising, airily,
Laden branches, swelling tree!
Leaf meander, come and go,
Dancing leaf thou tak'st not me.

Morning beams that round me dart
Magic sweetness, golden cheer,
You are far tho' seeming near;
Wind, thou warmest not my heart
Though thou driest every tear.

## FOLLY

WHO was it near me sighed?
  'Twas pale proud Melancholy;
"What pain do we now divide,"
  Quoth she, "Is it love or pride?"
No, no; 'tis nought but folly!
  'Tis nought, 'tis nought but folly!

"Folly of what complexion?"
  Fair mischief with fond eyes:
"And what her imperfection?"
  That away from me she flies.
"Then to music let us rally,
 That with such thoughts will tally,
  Till all vain longing dies."

## MADRIGAL

As he sat at the feet of his love,
  And with one hand was toying,
To her shoulder she lured a white-winged dove,
  For the other hand's employing.

"May I not call a moment mine?"
  Quoth he, "Oh dismiss thy minion,"—
"Fie, fie," she said with brow benign,
  Smoothing her darling's pinion.

*Oh beware! for the heart rebels*
  *When love insipid chains it:*
*Sweet comes in course, the palate else,*
  *Voluptuous, disdains it.*

"If for love," he cried, "you are still athirst;
  Of me, of me grow fonder,"
"Why not content to be the first?"
  She replies while her glances wander.

*Ah! beware! for love is ever wanton,*
  *If only toying, toying,*
*And well for you that a white-winged dove*
  *Is at hand for her decoying.*

## TO ——

Are you richer for the song I penned you?
    See now a sheaf I send you.

Are you poorer for the kiss you gave me?
    Nay then its fellow save me.

If that child's touch upon my lips requite
    An offering so light,

What if the deep enchantment of my spirit
    Should bid you fame inherit,

Kindling my verse as when a cloud on fire
    Draws all eyes to admire,

What would the gift be then? Ah! far above
    My music, were it love.

## AS THE OLIVES BEND DOWN TO SEA

As the olives bend down to the sea,
Touching the earth with a silver bough,
So I bend to thee
With silent longing and fruitless vow.
Ah! down the steep I would gladly rush,
But am rooted now,
And like the olives can only push
A branch thy way, and look below,
And murmur thy name on the mountain's brow.

## THE BOATMAN

BOATMAN! the sail unfurling
  Before the wind we'll float,
The water round us curling;
  For the earth I know by rote;
And the light lift of the boat
  On the laughing blithesome wave,
  Shall give me all I crave.
  Out Envy! Mad Possession!
What is ours but life's procession?
Let me take what nature offers;
    In my coffers
Treasure what the world may share;
With the ripple's beat and bubble,
Laugh at what the rich call trouble;
Rise, and see the coast-line gleaming,
    Vineyards teeming,
Fall, and all but miss the curving
Lines of mountains, swaying, swerving,
  With our motion, to our measure,
  Making fortune serve our pleasure.
Unmoored, unmoored my heart shall float,
  And the light lift of the boat
On the laughing, blithesome wave
    Shall give me all I crave.

## THE OLD BRIDGE

*Val Anzasca.*

LIZARD, I spy an alpine rose
  Beside you gaily springing;
Wild rose, I see the mountain stream
  His dew upon you flinging;
Stream, I espy a rustic bridge
  Spanning your wave demurely;
Old bridge, I see a kerchiefed maid
  Who walks your planks securely.
With youthful life her bosom heaves,
  Her foot is lightly planted,
Up by the wood she turns, and leaves
  The bridge and stream enchanted.

## A SHORE DOTH LOVE ANOTHER SHORE

A SHORE doth love another shore;
  Then lordly pines are felled,
And swiftly down to ocean's roar,
  A hollow ship compelled.

By the sea pink and lavender,
  And past the edges of the foam
Where the black seaweed is astir;
  Past rocks that guard the home,

Out in the offing of the bay,
  Borne on from crest to crest
Of clamorous waves, that till that day
  Ran aimless and unblest.

Across the vessel now they sweep,
  Man's joyous life to share,
The sea-birds dive, the dolphins leap;
  The storm kings in their lair,

Long used to ease a sullen mind
  By churning waves to froth,
Or shattering rocks, rejoice to find
  One who can feel their wrath.

By sundering men the gods foresee
  To the deep new life is given,
And that wan space might peopled be,
  They bide in distant heaven.

## THREE SONGS

### A Sequence

I

I yield, but am not conquered;
  Would I were more a slave!
You have not in rule such pleasure
  As I in service have.

You wound me, and I am stricken;
  Would it were really pain!
Would it corroded deeper,
  This ornamental chain!

Spare not! be keen and cruel,
  Sweet tyrant! chide me yet,
Be cruel, and then be tender,
  There is one I would fain forget.

II

No more kind looks and no more slights,
    Is it a loss or gain?
Fewer sad thoughts by days and nights,
    Yet fewer joys remain.

How light this bosom feels, how free!
    Yet something vacant too;
So my new mistress, Liberty,
    Like a lover I must woo.

III

To thee my steps are turning
  When Slumber's hand I take,
I see thee through the summer night,
  Thy voice when I awake

In my charmed ear re-echoes,
  Tho' silent all the day;
No accents e'er revealed a soul
  So gentle and so gay.

How oft to lute and viol
  I listen for thy strain,
Through labyrinths of mazy sound
  I follow, but in vain.

Now, Beatris, I fathom
  Thy poet's true design;
Thy lips were closed, and of goodwill
  Had given but little sign.

Then with a mighty patience,
  Submissive to God's law,
Through gulfs of pain, with slow approach,
  Tow'rds thee his footsteps draw.

Then he unlocked thy bosom
  From its stronghold of restraint,
Filling thy mouth with words and tones,
  For which his heart was faint.

And from zone to zone ascending,
  What wonders he espied!
When his want of love and constancy
  Thy lips ceased not to chide.

'Twas to hold thee still discoursing
  He made his scheme so vast,
And through whole cantos heard thy voice
  The universe recast.

But of my love no wisdom
  I would ask, nor golden phrase,
Yea, nothing more celestial
  Than a greeting of old days.

## WIT AND LOVE

WHERE the wingéd wit is sitting
  Mute on lips sedate and pure,
In the shadows love is flitting,
  Carefully obscure.

Round her lips wit plays and hovers,
  Till their silence they forego,
Then the parted line discovers
  Love's victorious bow.

## THE LORD OF THE MANOR

WHAT boots the volume of the world outspread
Before thine eyes of lead,
Its changes, and its pageants, and its dooms?
All these thy mind entombs
In its great burial-place, where sink to rest
The oppressor and the opprest;
Where feuds are hushed, and agitations lulled,
And all proud gains annulled.
New powers are throned, new truths of various glance
Appear—nay, they advance,
They overrun thee, but thou knows't it not,
In thy manorial plot
Deeply embedded, stolid and secure,
Like a great boulder on a tawny moor.

# II

## FOUR MINSTRELS

I

I CAN be sorrowful, thoughtful, or scornful,
  I can be lively and sharp,
Carelessly joyous, or dreamily mournful,
  For so many strings has my harp.
Piercingly ring they, loftily, daringly,
  Under the Muses' control;
One little cadence I whisper them sparingly,
  That from my secret soul.

II

What are you busy with, good youth?
A marriage song for Love and Truth.

What gave that random fancy birth?
A glimpse of the new heaven and earth.

That we call mystical, my friend;
Doubtless, but o'er that task I bend.

What keeps you constant to your aim?
Beauty unseized, and distant fame.

III

"In the world's garden who can cull
  No herb of healing power,
Must with eternal music lull
  The anguish of the hour."

O poet, in thy far-ranging flight,
  With many a mournful cry,
Thou bringest the wealth of the world to light,
  And on thy wings we fly.

How wondrous is the soul! how warm
  Yet lofty its desire!
Miraculous is Nature's charm!
  Strike, poet, strike thy lyre.

The world shall call thy losses gains,
  Then all thyself impart;
Existence shows its ruddy veins,
  From the wound within thy heart.

IV

"The trees are all nodding and bending
  To the measure I set from below,
To hear me the brook is descending,
  The lithe swallows dart to and fro.
The leaves of the sycamore tremble
  To the roll of my epic, I ween,
Yea, the clouds in the zenith assemble,"
  Sings the wren on the stalk of a bean.

"The doves circle round me to listen,
  The plum-tree empurples his fruit,
The stars of the clematis glisten,
  And higher the bulrushes shoot;
The lover my rondel is humming,
  He will whisper his lady unseen,
That at last the new poet is coming,"
  Sings the wren on the stalk of a bean.

## A SOUTHERN GIRL

THE chant has ceased, and through its echoes she hears
The plaintive prayer to Mary Mother intoned,
With soft "Amen" that falters from arch to arch.
Then from her cushion rising with eyes bedimmed
She follows in its motion a wandering beam,
That hither, thither, topaz and violet, flits
About the column, now on the altar, now
Above the kneeling priest it is seen to rest.
"A token from above on the saintly man,"
She thinks with awe, as along the aisle she moves,
Beneath the window saints in their aureoles,
Demure, and passing out to the golden air
Breathes free, and takes with a smile an offered flower.
Ere she knows how it chances, or what befalls,
Her heart, late tuned to a penitential psalm,
Thrills with the swaying crowd in the Fountain Square,
Where two are locked together with dagger gleam;
And flooding every movement with light, her eyes,
But now in wistful gaze on the two large tears
Ready to fall of the Mother of Pain in the niche,
Hold in their glowing mirror the shifting scene

Exalted, as though 'twere played to a jewelled
court;
Her red lips bite the stalk of a rose, that else,
But for this show, had laughed with pride in her
hair.
Breathless she watches flash and parry and clench,
And notes the crimson spot on the fountain-stone;
At last she takes the rose from her lips and cries,
"Gesù, thorough the shoulder, a pretty stroke!"

## LINES FOR MUSIC

A PERFUME out of the past,
From the flowers your fingers were braiding
And carelessly cast
By the way,
Is pervading
The bloom of the day,
And at last,
Turns the song of the white-handed May
To complaint,
The splendour of Nature is fading
Before it though faint.

## TO ——

I

One day in seven I see you,
  Though oft your face I seek.
My life is like a flower
  That opens once a week.

II

Then on the light it gathers
  In one day's bliss and bloom,
It feeds while it is folded
  For six days in the tomb.

III

And when the term is ended,
  Each leaf in haste it moves,
Till in the glowing daylight
  It looks on what it loves.

## NIGHT

On the mountain crescent glistens
  The cloud from its wanderings free:
The breathless pinewood listens
  To the voice at the edge of the sea.

The sea pauseth and waiteth
  For a whisper from the land;
The pride of life abateth;
  Cliff-shadows kneel on the sand.

Rocks, mountains softly moulded,
  I am come your breath to draw,
With you to be enfolded,
  In child-like peace and awe.

By man deserted, sharing
  No more his friendly sky,
Thro' the void ether bearing
  Intent the eternal eye.

## THE WINDOW

'Tis so, when one from a window looks without purpose or plan,
He sees what is new in the old, and marvels at Nature and Man.

This morn I look at the land-locked bay, and the passing crowd,
And see the moss on the wall, and the upland meeting the cloud.

The captive trees, with averted boughs on the Esplanade
In the dance of their shadows are gay as those by a forest glade.

On the coast-guard's cliff, with children at play, sheep nibble and roam;
Below, sea-swallows circle about the edge of the foam.

Farther aslant on the fall of the tide the brigantine leans;
Near it, with crossing lines oblique, the coaster careens.

The Indian looks at the ash with eyes that remember the palm,
And from motion to motion of lassitude falls like a sail in a calm.

I see the young mother with babe in arm, and Madonna face,
From the profaner crowd aloof in her dainty grace.

Limps a poor woman along, and curtsies to mother and child,
The babe leans forward amazed, but the mother is unbeguiled.

Boy-babe, do you start at the poor, not knowing that all these years
We eye them as part of the show, nor wonder at tatters and tears?

A Christ-like child you look as from mother's bosom you stretch
Wide-open palms but empty, alas! to the care-worn wretch.

Upward now in the anguish of pity your arms you toss,
All, all, yourself you would give, but that way leads to the Cross.

## DOUBT

STUNG by an April shower I stood
  Under an archway dim;
Stole in upon the motley crowd
  A woman young and slim.

We that were in the shadow felt
  Her entrance to the place,
For as water breaks to light so broke
  Each movement into grace.

She comes in her beauty's eminence,
  And on either side they yield,
For in the folds of her faded gown
  Distinction is revealed.

"Our earth will ne'er be given to fire
  Before her sister spheres,
When such an one she can bring to light
  But in a thousand years."

This, this is she I have waited for
  From the beginning, and still
From idols I have kept myself
  To be worthy her goodwill.

Nearer I move, and on her brow
  Saw candour infantine;
Her lips were moulded for the truth,
  But love had touched the line.

She turned a bracelet in her hand
  Set with medallions three;
They were Joan, Mary, and Antoinette,
  High names in chivalrie.

Her eyes were hid, like jewels they
  Were on her trinket set,
The face most studied of the three
  I saw was Antoinette.

It may have been her mother's? . . . Yes,
  But why is she alone? . . .
I muse. Look on her face again,
  I look, but she is gone.

## THE ART STUDENT

I CHANCED to meet you once, do you remember
Under the archway, by the Pazzi Palace,
And in your hand you held a figured goblet;
I took it from you unresisted, seeking
To hold you there, and laboured out the inscription,
And viewed it round and round, and asked you whither,
To whom, and to what banquet you conveyed it.
And after question hurried on to question,
Prompting myself with words to speak at random,
Dreading a gap of silence, wildly fluent,
Making such ventures that we laughed together,
My wits being all in giddy holiday;
Until at last I found myself repeating
Old questions, like a priest at confirmation.
At this you held your hand to take the goblet,
And then a moment from pure grace and favour,
Delayed, then turned, and then again delaying
Gave me a second greeting from compassion.
And I to my employment went light-hearted,
And there I showed such tokens of our meeting,
Such kindness and such joyful wit and patience,
That all my fellow craftsmen wondered, looking
Surprise at one another, thus translated,
"Is this the comrade wont to be so hasty?"

## FAR FROM ME, FAR FROM ME

Far from me, far from me,
    Flit Peace and Leisure,
In what isle of the Southern Sea
    Take they their pleasure?

From the ambient earth, from depth and height,
    Contentment stealing,
Bubbling billows, bird in flight,
    For thought and feeling.

Tumult, envy, toil and teen
    Are there forgiven,
Turned to spots of crimson sheen
    In the mind's heaven.

Feuds, disasters, endless tears
    Of love ill-fated,
Become ere they can reach their ears
    To song related.

Oh to change clamorous arguments
    And proud opinions,
For the still-flowing smooth events
    Of their dominions:

Where old Ocean to the land
His flock convening,
Finds a wild swan on the sand
His feathers preening:

Where on a morning after storm
The mind may treasure,
In its own lasting language-form,
Nature's brief pleasure.

## THREE SONNETS

### A Sequence

I

Where do your beaming wonder and desire
  Enrich the world that else is but a shade,
Lighting its dulness with ethereal fire,
  While we upon your absence fret and fade?
Who takes your hand? Who intercepts your glance?
  What novel pattern, what luxurious dye
In the rich arabesque of circumstance
  Is banquet to your proud and covetous eye?
But why should I malign thee with that word,
  And why pursue thee with so blind an aim?
All my wild guesses miss thee, my sweet bird,
  Nor pierce this intervening social frame
That parts us like a close-entangled wood,
Where birds may sing but cannot be pursued.

II

Why art thou still the same? Why dost thou keep
A constant form and feature all unchanged,
When thou hast left thy better self to weep
Its image tarnished, and its faith estranged?
Why be so one, so precious, and so rare,
So little like but one in outward seeming,
That as we look thou art beyond compare,
And from this error there is no redeeming.
Thy soul is truant, faithless, wild and rude,
A wanderer in the labyrinth of chance,
Formless and variable as a flood,
That where it slippeth gaily it doth dance:—
Yet though I heap the sum of thy offence,
'Tis all forgot in beauty's innocence.

III

My heart denies thee access and resort,
  And I have set my officers of state
To chase thee from the precincts of my court;
  Thou art proclaimed and outlawed, and thy date
No more remembered in my busy mind,
  Nor in my highways hast thou leave to walk,
Nor in my garden mayst a refuge find,
  Though every flower should beckon from his stalk.
But as an insurrection long subdued
  Its songs and badges in the hamlet leaves,
Shows beacons in the mountain solitude,
  And whispers in the hedges on dark eves,
So some solicitude beyond my will
Remembers thee and wears thy favour still.

## REVERIE

*Orta.*

THE falling white cloud is breaking its edge
  On the stalwart mountain's brow,
Falling and creeping from ledge to ledge,
  As the light winds allow,
Till the ripple against the garden wall
Counts it vanished beyond recall.

A petal of red oleander rocks
  On the airy colourless wave,
And with defiant beauty mocks
  Our meditation grave;
Till the ripple against the garden wall
Counts it vanished beyond recall.

The wingèd hour but a moulten feather
  In the hands that grasp it leaves;
Lovers make much of time when you come together,
  For thinking after grieves,
When the ripple against the garden wall
Counts it vanished beyond recall.

## RETURN TO ITALY

I

Did I look for more than olive, cypress and vine,
And the red flower blooming on the castle-wall,
While the sails are dropping down
To the Zephyr's pretty frown,
By salients of the wind-swept Appenine?

II

Part with part from peak to cape
One controlling hand doth shape;
Shore and bay curved like a shell,
Islet, inlet,—who can tell
What is wanting to the spell?
For like the cadence of a mighty song,
Curves the proud mountain to the tideless sea,
Across whose undulation free
The white road dips and rises airily,
Coasting along
By cliff and ravine
Till poised upon a rock 'tis seen;
Then disappears with sudden turn
Where the cactus-blossoms burn.
No more I haste with greedy glance
For what beyond may chance,
Of new illusion or of old romance;
What is beyond let the seagull learn;
'Tis the same beauty still in flight,
And the same love but less delight.

III

I need another by, that I may know
It is not passing as an idle show,
That I am here indeed, not a thin shade,
A memory of myself has hither strayed
Sees the young matron pass with child on arm,
Who smiles and wantons with her necklace-
charm;
Sees the red-kerchiefed girl upon the stair
Pausing, and looking round with eyes as fair
As Viola's, whose phantom she might be.
Is all I dreamt become reality
And I myself in turn the dream? O Muse,
Who canst at will the light and darkness use,
What thought, what art, what music shall essay
To put the world within my grasp to-day,
Strike it to life and with a touch divine
Show it to others that it may be mine.

## AS LONG AS THE BREATH

As long as the breath sweeps over my lip
    You will be dear to me,
    O sweet let slip
That dainty network of caprice
    In which you glance about,
And your true feature let us see,
    Beyond compare
With any counterfeit more fair.
Think you our true love to enhance
With tempest after heavenly peace,
And dazzling favour after doubt?
That is an elfin-child's romance.

## CHANGES

*Lake of Como.*

THE last cloud from the zenith
  The winds in silence bear;
But one white peak remaineth
  In the unillumined air.

To every change sweet Nature
  Conciliates wave and hill,
Remoulding every feature
  With delight in her own skill.

She fears no frowns nor glances
  Of alienation cold,
Though hooded Eve advances,
  And the Sun's tale is told.

She recks not of his embers,
  Her fire is soon renewed;
While with passion the heart remembers,
  In peace doth Nature brood.

See! Twilight's intermission
  Fulfilled, he seeks his tent,
And Night like a great musician
  Sits down to the instrument.

By an Alp the car of Dian
  Rests, while she looks below
Thro' the shaggy woods ; Orion
  Shrinks from her silver bow.

On the lake's mirror paling
  Hesper a glance bestows,
And like a bride unveiling
  Capella softly glows.

A leaf of the plantain quivers,
  And an olive grey with care
In his wrinkled branches shivers,
  To see the world so fair.

## ANDROMEDA

SET in the stars are all our wrongs,
  Who can vex Andromeda now? . . .
  Her eyes are glass, her wounded brow
Stains the dull rock, for death she longs.

She looks: the creature tow'rds her turns
  Crunching the shells . . . Who frees her hands
  So gently? Who before her stands?
Perseus; and back to life she burns.

Those death-filled hours upon the rock
  No term of mortal life repays,
  So she is throned whence she may gaze
Secure o'er earthly change and shock.

To greater pain the Gods avow
  The richer remedy belongs;
  Who can vex Andromeda now?
Set in the stars are all our wrongs.

## THE HUT

*Val Anzasca.*

THE vines are trellised over the roof,
  Wild rose on the rafters thin,
On the porch oleander winds his woof,
  And squalor sits within.

Truly a pauper's hut will match
  So mean a life as ours,
Yet ever the broken roof we thatch,
  Art, with thy gadding flowers.

Some say the likeness of a bower
  The sordid shed retains;
And some, tho' vine and rose may flower,
  A hovel it remains.

## MIDSUMMER

O childish-gay Midsummer hours!
Though born in our domain,
No fellowship with us you feign.
When we say, "Ah well-a-day!
What a tangled life is ours,
    We can but feel it,
Pure delight is not allowed
And for peace, the world will steal it,"
With the sun and moon you play,
Cross the sky and build the cloud;
    Then descending,
With light feet, the ears of corn
    At your will are bending;
Or you dance a merry round
With the meadow-flowers new-born,
    White and pied,
All with a chain of silver sound
    Accompanied,
Which we hear when most forlorn.

## SUMMER LIGHTNING

In the gloaming, lately roaming,
By the streamlet chafing, foaming,
Flashed the lightning, ever bright'ning,
  Then my love clung fast to me.

"Why so fearful, faint and tearful?
This is summer fire and cheerful,
Meteor splendour, harmless, tender,
  Turn and watch it, sweet, with me."

Then her loving arm removing,
"Sir, 'tis you," she cried reproving,
"Too enlightened, that are frightened
  At a harmless flash from me."

## O WHERE SHALL LOVE BE FOUND?

O where shall Love be found?
In places dark and deep,
Where the wingless hours creep
Among forgotten dreams;
Ambushed, where no light streams;
With waifs and castaways,
Discarded, out of grace,
Hid where no watch is set,
And feigning to be bound
In slumber's filmy net;
While above it life is wrought
To patterns of new thought—
There shall true Love be found!
Beneath farewells and fretting,
Long silence and forgetting,
Cold pride and cruel passion,
In his unconscious fashion,
Still hopeful, still alert,
As if he took no hurt
From all this spite unmeasured,
Well knowing he is treasured
In the fastness of the soul,
Beyond the will's control:
And should occasion call,
With but a word or glance,
He who was held in thrall
In quick deliverance
Appeareth in his place,
Master by right and grace.

# III

## HAVEN NOR HOME

HAVEN nor home has the cloud, but yielding its life as it passes
It leaves the flower refreshed;
Th' incoherent wind's mad buffetings swiftly to harbour
Impel the wished-for barque:
Often a witless dream wide-wandering threads at a venture
The golden gate of Truth:
Often a furious sea on the shore that it rends with its breakers
Upturns a rose-lipped shell:
So this meaningless world from its manifold web of illusion
Unfolds to me your love.

## THE GUARDIAN ANGEL

When you hear a whisper—
  "Walk in fear,"
Your Guardian Angel
  To God draws near;

New strength to gather,
  New peace to win,
A moment to rest
  The fold within.

He joins in the prayers
  At the Mercy-Seat,
Which the seraph-children
  Smiling repeat.

He looks on the beauty
  Of Paradise,
Till the earth-shadow
  Fades from his eyes.

Flows the old rapture
  Of fellowship
Into his bosom,
  Over his lip.

Then forth he issues
  In armour of light,
Woven of beams
  Invisibly bright.

When you hear a whisper—
  "Have no fear,"
Your Guardian Angel
  From God draws near.

## SUNLIGHT

Sun, shining full upon my breast,
As I stand the church without,
After an argument well exprest
Inclining faith to doubt,
Thou seizest me as one that would prevail;
Shine on the ocean, glisten on the sail.

"Where is my poem? Where the strain
Long promised, long my due,
Whose generous life-abounding vein
Should the dull world renew?"
These words seem with the wind to rise and fall
That shakes the red valerian on the wall.

O sovereign beam, thou dost not own
The loveless hours in which we fade,
Man's sorrows reach a depth unknown
To thy sweet comfort; in the shade
Will truth be won that must the soul avail;
Shine on the ocean, glisten on the sail.

"Thou too, dost thou within the mist
Of vaporous thought," the voice returns,
"Search for the truth and life resist,
God's splendour that within thee burns?
Truth is all fervour, joy, and golden beam,
Rapture of living, other truth is dream."

## VITA NUOVA

Now is the flower of morning open blown,
And we come forth as to a world unknown,
Created but this hour, all innocence,
The spirit still brooding o'er the realm of sense,
    And all the future given,
    In the expanding heaven;
Life in eternal fulness there revealed,
Which time in fragments joy by joy must yield:
    All present, all to come,
Contentment ever adding to its sum.
    So young the sky, so pure the air,
      As if indeed
On the first promise we did feed
      With the unfallen pair,
    Secure of immortality
    Awaiting love; in that still hour
When Adam:—"What new Wonder of the light,
What Presence, what Dominion comes with power
My peaceful mind with beauty to affright?"
    And a voice moves from tree to tree
"Fond soul, 'tis only I who come to thee."

## TASSO TO LEONORA

I

O Leonora! by thy side
Where the world may be defied,
Joy and daring seize my soul,
And beneath thine eyes' control,
I begin to understand
How the starry heavens were planned.
These are the prodigalities
Of love you see upon the skies,
In a moment's rapture tost,
In their own profusion lost,
Lavished with a sweeping hand
Which no power can countermand.
'Tis his glory and his right:
All creation comes to light
By this impulse to a gift,
The same that doth the heart uplift.
Heaven is not far
Nor the domain of Jove
From the dilated freedom of my love.
Oh I could throw
The garland on thy brow
To Ariadne's star.

II

You should have lived in the olden time
When life was offered up,
And the treasure of the heart with praise
Poured in a golden cup,

With quaint designs of heroes wrought,
  That soon was filled with wine,
And to each bearded warrior brought
  Deftly by hands like thine.

For afterwards they held a feast,
  Were merry and profane.
That such good customs long have ceased
  You justly might complain.

III

My words are harsh and bitter;
  They will not long be so,
A little more, and love ashamed
  Will lose his earnest glow.

'Tis flood-time, and within me
  Swells the old love, but soon—
E'en now I feel 'tis ebbing fast
  Beneath the changeful moon.

I am sanguine and eager-hearted,
  I could pray prayers insane,
On starry Leo I could call
  To shake loose his tawny mane

In fire upon this city
  Where such devilry is planned:
But may the breath that pleads with thee
  Be the last at my command.

## ACHILLES AND PENTHESILEA

"THIS from the hand of a girl to Achilles superb!"
As the words fly,
Rings on the buckler the dart, rings and rebounds to the earth,
Ere she is ware of his coming his sword plays around her, she falters,
Wounded, unhelmeted, falls. Pierced with her beauty he moans,
"Wretch that I am, and doomed to disaster! O Penthesilea
Live!" But with each hard breath ebbing, her life wells forth.
Heart-struck he as a woman laments still kneeling beside her;
Unmoved she as a man, full on her conqueror stares.

## GENIUS LOCI

THE lifting and the light fall of the skiff,
The bending of the grasses leisurely,
Near the old pathway of the crumbling cliff
To the same breeze that used to wave your hair,
More with the genius of the scene agree
And the old charm towards which I vainly reach,
Than splintered rocks, and boulders on the beach,
Now dwindled, that we deemed beyond compare.
The spell was wholly in the place I thought,
Which now returns, by these few touches wrought,
With the old power; as one half absently
Over a viol runs a careless bow
Grazing the strings, and yet the tune we know.
There is the moss upon the broken stair
Deep-angled in the wall where we would sit,
Nor spake a word of love, but joined the talk
Of pattering leaf and whispering wave, as they
Would join in ours and to our silence play;
Forth of a sudden would the martin flit
And leave the ivy twirling on the stalk.
The charm is here; the softness of the air,
The ruddy tinge upon the milky sea,
The stillness of the cloud, are parts of it;
But the warm sunlight chills me to the bone
As I sit here, as I look forth, alone.

## WHY HAST THOU CHANGED AND DARKENED

*Lago di Varese.*

WHY hast thou changed and darkened
  When all was late so clear,
And the words to which I hearkened
  Made the light of day more dear?

Thou gavest me charm and token,
  And a promise in which to rest;
But in the wave 'tis broken,
  And by the wind possessed.

Oh why didst thou change and darken?
  Unlooked for power was thine,
The olive bent low to hearken,
  And the wild rose bent from the vine:—

When the words were so shyly spoken
  That set all doubt at rest;
And the promise so lightly broken
  Was so earnestly expressed.

## SONNET

Now thou art left to look upon the time;
  Wishing thou had'st not given thy heart such scope;
And spelling backward love's bewildering rhyme,
  Wilt pause on each light word that gave thee hope;
And many an old occasion wilt review,
  Sifting it to its elements again,
Whence some faint meaning may be pressed anew
  To thy advantage, but thou toil'st in vain.
As one that moves about a field of death
  And holds his lantern close to every face,
Questions the silent heart, and for a breath
  Listens intently, loth to quit the place.
So wilt thou waste the night in search forlorn,
  Till beggared time brings back an empty morn.

## WITHIN AND WITHOUT

THE boughs clash, and the leaves like sparks fly
round.
Was that last look a question or a doubt?
Shudders the wood, the thunder jars the ground.
Peaceful thy image dwells amid the rout.

And now 'tis light. How pure the air, how sweet!
Thou walkest with me in the bending grass,
And that quick look which is my life I meet
In every pool that eyes me as I pass.

## CONFESSION

FLOWERS unfading night is braiding
  O'er the graves of men;
All-beholding heaven is folding
  Valley, grove and glen.

What is spoken mid the unbroken
  Peace? What sin confest?
Hush thy weeping, child, 'tis keeping
  Angels from their rest.

## THE MILL

GRIND, O Man,
In thy invisible mill,
  Unceasingly grind
To powder the manifold world.
  Art thou not fashioned
  Of old for this labour,
  With infinite skill,
  Thus to manipulate
  Matter for mind?
Behind thee all fear
And humility cast:
Pause not, repent not,
Spare not for worth,
And for beauty relent not,
  Iconoclast.

But why this ridiculous
Writhing and twisting,
Through failure persisting
In futile endeavour
To cast yourself in with the rest
And be ground, yet with zest

Unabated be still—
Complacent as ever—
There unremittingly,
There imperturbably
Grinding the mill?

## MAN

O FRIVOLOUS querulous
Voice in the void,
Unreal petulant Man,
Whose inanimate soul
Immortality woos;
Mobile bubble of air,
Motionless clod of the earth;
Eager for fellowship, yet
Self-idolatrous, vain;
Unloving, greedy of love;
Earnestly praying for light,
Yet with a spirit obtuse
Intercepting the gift;
Sad in thy impotence, more
Saddening still in thy mirth;
Boastful creator, thyself
Unformed, coming to life;
Nearer and nearer to thee
Must the Immortals live,
Yea, at thy hearthstone sit,
Ere thou art rightfully Man.

## URANIA

I ASK not you, the wise, and strong, and fair,
  To leave for me the wealth you have amassed,
  Knowledge, or fame, or happiness, low-cast;
Too settled in your order for my care;
But with the poor unprospered folk I share
  The bliss of my contentment, in whose eyes
  My service is no labour, sacrifice
They know but as a gift beyond compare.
These will attain to follow where I move:
  Willing to lose the world and be complete:
    Able to turn and listen and yield the mind
Obsequious to my impulse, as a dove
  Balancing to the motion of the wind,
    On even plumes, in correspondence sweet.

## LIGHT

THE ceaseless action of the light fire-spun
Meets the desire to see, and Truth is won;
'Tis to the limit of our vision told,
And more and more as we can more behold;
For this the powers that in creation lurk
From the extremes of heaven together work.

## THE ARTIST

PRIVATION, like an artist keen,
  Looks far for beauty and repose,
And shapes with humbleness of mien
  More lovely forms than Pleasure knows;
Imparting to each high design
Some new humanity divine.

There with clear-thoughted Justice walks
  Forbearance with a wounded brow;
There to his bosom-friend Love talks
  Uranian truth, as forth they go
Distributing life's bread and wine,
The new humanity divine.

## ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS

I

HAIL, Thou new Almighty Power
  Given us from above!
Born of woman, earthly flower,
  Breathing peace and love;
With our cares to be offended,
  Neath our clouds to rest,
Where the poor are unbefriended
  And the weak opprest.
We, Thy shepherds, bend before Thee,
Ere Thou reignest we adore Thee,
    Christ the Lord!

II

On Thy lips a smile is telling
  Childhood's holy trust,
As if still Thou had'st Thy dwelling
  With the pure and just.
Ah! Thy tender intercession,
  Lamb of God, we need:
At Thy feet we make confession
  And Thy Name we plead.
Christ, the new Almighty Power,
Born of woman, earthly flower,
    Christ the Lord!

III

Through our veins new life is flowing,
  As we gaze on Thee,
Knowing all things, but unknowing
  Sin's sad mystery.
With Thine eyes Thou dost the Evangel
  Of good will repeat,
Every look is like an angel
  From the Mercy-Seat.
We Thy shepherds kneel before Thee,
In Thy weakness we adore Thee,
      Christ the Lord!

## EASTER SONG

PROMISE linking age to age,
King to prophet, priest to sage,
Till one morn the truth is told,
From the tomb the stone is rolled,
Christ is risen!

Tree of life with golden fruit,
Whereof all the past is root!
Every soul from hour to hour
Sits within thy blissful bower,
Christ is risen!

This assurance every child,
From deep heaven benign and mild,
With each hasty fluttering breath,
Draws into the house of death:
Christ is risen!

When with this the mind is filled,
Care is soothed and trouble stilled;
Every morning from the East
Calls all nations to this feast,
Christ is risen!

# IV

## CUPID AND MELPOMENE

I

LIKE the snow from Ida drifting,
Cupid came, an arrow lifting,
Roved abroad and flew and scampered,
Airing thus his humour pampered.

Skimmed the vales, the upland breasted,
Stoutly with the wind contested,
Then before it smoothly scudded,
Down to cities temple-studded.

Saw the waves in giddy motion,
Then for passage through the ocean
Called the steed that bore Orion,
With a Triton, and sea-lion

For companions, made a pillow
Of a gently curving billow;
Reached the rim of the Ægean:
Landed, slept, woke, sang a pæan.

II

"There it looms the sacred mountain!
With its song-exciting fountain!
Through the forest I will travel,
Where my wits I can unravel."

On with brow sedate he marches,
Under curling boughs or larches,
"Here to rest a moment hidden
By this beech is not forbidden."

Woodlarks, tits and finches flocking,
Find the bough where he is rocking,
Sylvan creatures round him gather,
Ruddy fur, and motley feather.

Doves upon his hand alighting,
Mavis, magpie, fluttering, fighting,
On his quiver perch, or bolder,
Hustling balance on his shoulder.

As he looks each glance discloses
Arcades, grottoes, rills and roses;
Nymphs and Oreads, roused from sleeping,
From behind the boles are peeping.

"Who would not with birds together
In the forest trim a feather?"
Cupid cried, "How cool and pleasant!
But like love, 'tis evanescent."

III

Darkling grew the wood embowered,
Silver light the fountain showered,
Sat a maiden by the waters,
'Twas the pearl of Memory's daughters.

Quick he drew a reedy arrow,
Aiming with an eyelid narrow.
With a long-drawn note she charmed him,
Then on sudden she disarmed him.

"Listen, child, while I with singing
Back to life the dead am bringing."
"What! the dead?" the boy made answer,
"Are you then a necromancer?

Heed not, Muse, my sparks and sallies,
Sing to mountains, woods and valleys,
Let your song float into heaven
And wake up the Pleiads seven."

Then she broke in gracious story,
Hymning Fate and Kronōs hoary.
Shook the leaves, the water glistened,
Cupid rolled his eyes and listened.

IV

Deepening now with mellow organ
She intoned of Demogorgon,
And the Sisters serpent-crested,
With the threads of life invested.

And of Chaos and his era,
Battling Titan, wild chimæra,
Phorkyads, and the moon-eyed Sphinxes,
Harpies too, and other minxes.

Many a name of might she uttered,
Cupid pursed his lips and muttered,
But when Nemesis was sounded
Cupid to her bosom bounded.

"Dearest Muse, why this incessant
Talk of Hades? Life is pleasant,
All before us, love and laughter,
Leave to Pluto what comes after.

But my lips I know are truant,
Yours are grave as they are fluent,
If a kiss they would but favour,
More of wisdom mine might savour."

But or ere the words were spoken
She had given the faithful token,
Which the faithless boy receiving
Gave her back, his spirit leaving.

V

Still she sang but in such fashion,
Terror melted to compassion,
Many a word with tears was broken,
Some in sighs remained unspoken.

As she sang the fountain glistened,
Cupid rolled his eyes and listened;
"Why, the very ghosts," he stammered,
"With your tales would be enamoured.

On your lips so grave and pious,
That with virtue's praise would try us,
How engaging is love's sadness,
And your treatment of its madness,

How heartrending and delightful!
And your jealousy how spiteful!
By my mother's tresses twisted,
In your camp I am enlisted.

Here I vow and make confession,
You alone give love expression,
What are songs with all their magic
To your scenes and outcries tragic?
Dearest Muse Melpomene."

## VIGIL

When thou art driven forth in the night,
  While the happy slumber on,
Thy trouble will teach thee to read aright
  What they would vainly con.

To the open heaven dost thou uplift
  Haggard, inquiring eyes?
Thou wilt be lost in time, and drift
  Under Chaldæan skies,

Naming the stars, for thou wert there,
  So far the beam is cast
Of thy faint consciousness, aware
  Of an unsounded past.

Thyself it was through bliss and bane,
  With the same mind intent
On the sequences and golden chain
  Of the heavenly argument;

Tenaciously with fixéd gaze
  While æons round thee melt

Widening the rings of time and space
  Wherein thy spirit dwelt.

Look downward if thou wilt, but soon
  Within thine ears will stay
What the earth mutters to the moon
  Comparing night with day;

Action with thought; upon this clod
  To make our footing sure?
Or in the infinity of God
  Passive to rest and pure?

Or dost thou to the muffled wood
  Carry thy little world?
A song will come to ease thy mood
  Under the branches curled.

And when the undistinguished trees
  Come forward one by one,
Out of the night, as each foresees
  The advent of the sun,

Thou wilt learn how dear thy presence is
  To the brood of mother earth,
One who can share their morning bliss,
  And praise their beauty's worth—

A spirit, with fluttering thoughts for leaves.
  Who knows the mystery
Of the fellowship which each receives
  And gives in his degree?

The wild rose in the wood withdrawn
  Claims thee for witness true,
How on her petals looks the dawn
  When she would day renew.

"See, see, how craftily she lays
  Her tints to rival mine,
At the meeting-place, the crowning grace,
  Where red and white combine."

## CARRARA

STONE-PINES are casting
  Faint shadows, pale olives
Flock downward to meet our ascent,
  But are found, when around us
Their branches are closing,
  On solitude bent,
Shy, nun-like, aloof,
  Our laughter opposing
With silence and modest reproof.

Then out to the heather,
Pinaster, arbutus, and bay,
By the hut with its cypress
Awaiting the day;
Hills rising together,
Enlarging the scene,
Till the spears of the larches
    Intervene:
While our old domain,
Half-felt, half-discerned
Coast-line and crescent,
And woods which Autumn
Has touched, not burned,

We still retain,
Ideally present
As part of the scene;
Drawing breath as we climb
Of sweet basil and thyme.

What comes to me,
And holds me tranced and still,
As I climb the yellowing hill?
Is it a sense
Of community intense,
With the great heart-beat
Of the earth beneath my feet,
With the expectant air,
And the faintly-glimmering sea?
Or is it some wider
Communion that fills
My vacant soul,
As I stand withdrawn
In the utter stillness of dawn? . . .
*I hear you, I come!*
How shall I hold it, how retain
This ineffable strain
That to music belongs,
And holds in its bosom
A thousand songs?

*I come, I come*
Up through the pine woods'
Precipitous stair,
Whose branches are closing
All vistas fair,

We stumble; these watch us
And move as we move,
Like a disciplined band
Changing formation
By word of command.

With a glance and a gleam
And outcries wild
Like a petulant child
Comes a thread of a stream,
Darting vociferous
Through the indifferent
Silent pines.

Now we move among fragments
Of splintered rock,
Disjointed and sundered
By tempest-shock.
Then wedged in a serpentine
Narrowing cleft,
Overshadowed and groping
From right to left,
Of a sudden before us
The cliffs break away;—
And behold the white mountain
Ablaze with the day!

A long dumb stare!
At last sensation
Recovers its breath:
"How great!" one saith.
Then down we fare.

What now of the strain
That held you tranced and still
On the slope of the yellowing hill?
And within you burned
Like the sense of love returned?
Has it vanished? Nay, nay,
In its loss it will stay;
To the Muse it belongs,
And holds in its bosom
A thousand songs.

## BY NIGHT

By night the thorn is budding
  Tho' in the moon's cold rays,
By night the tide is flooding
  Black reefs, and twinkling bays;
A ship in the silent harbour
  Glideth, and sails are furled,
While thou in balmy darkness
  Art innocent of the world.

There's a gleam amid the grasses
  Of a rivulet fugitive,
And a touch on the cloud that passes
  The wit of the day to give;
In the poplar's branch is tangled
  The Serpent's shining fold,
But thou art all forgetting,
  And to our dreams art cold.

Ivy-shadows are fretting
  Thy window fitfully,
Stars are rising and setting,
  Without a glance from thee.
I have come by copse and meadow
  To breathe thy neighbourhood,
But thou art all unwitting
  As the ringdove in the wood.

## BY NIGHT

Between two oaks far-rooted
  A king-fern curls to sleep,
I saw a velvet-footed
  Forester by it creep:
The night-jar took his station
  And the wild wisp lit his torch,
But thou art self-enfolded
  Like the rose upon thy porch.

Does thy soul, in act and motion
  Unfettered, now dilate
In the limitless ocean
  Of Being uncreate?
No more to us belonging,
  Touching our earth no more
Than with its rhythmic breathing
  That breaks upon our shore.

Or art thou in slumber holding
  Firmly to thine own kind?
But like an artist moulding
  Our landscape to thy mind?
O to be thy companion
  Whether on wind or wave,
Or to hold a torch before thee
  In an opalescent cave!

'Tis all figure and feigning
  When thou hast moved away;
If I knew where thou wert reigning
  I would come beneath thy sway.

I would leave the Constellations
  And the blossoms in their bowers,
I would leave the Moon and Vega
  To fulfil their ghostly hours.

With thee to be secluded
  In a realm all thine and mine,
Where never sun intruded
  Nor star had leave to shine;
Where all events are passing
  In a more delicate light
Than from the axle darteth
  Of the Charioteer in flight.

In what climate should I meet thee
  To what sea-board should I fare?
Must I take wings to greet thee
  As swallows touch in the air?
Dost thou see Miranda walking
  With a lute-governed grace?
Or from a Nile-boat landing
  Meet Pharaoh face to face?

Art thou thyself surprising
  By some peril drawing near?
Or some Masque art thou devising
  In which we all appear?
Some pomp or dream-procession
  More ravishing to the mind
Then e'er the Tuscan's pencil
  For the black Duke designed?

Or art thou thwarted ever
  Like a traveller checked and foiled
By a looped and linkéd river
  In wide Savannah coiled?
Then in thy perturbation
  Thou might'st look round for me,
And together we would wander
  Till the river found the sea.

# V

# SONNETS

## LAW

THE abyss, the expanse, the zenith of Thy power
  Thou hidest, that we be not stilled with awe,
  While through the quiet avenues of law
Thou lead'st Thy flock in order, star and flower;
That Reason, more concurrent every hour
  With nature's rhythmic beat, and at each flaw
  Prompt to regain the measure, may withdraw
From rash idolatry, though priest may lower.

But as Religion in that ancient clan
  Freed from the worship of inhuman thrones,
    Stubbornly in its ritual proceeds,
Nor quits the symbol, though the heavenly Man
  Prefigured to a full deliverance leads;
    So Reason, void of reason, God disowns.

## DOUBT

SHALL doubt be silent then as some pretend?
  Nay, sift with doubt till faith and light agree,
  Spirits are ever by their birthright free;
In voluntary homage must they bend
Who to Thy temple, Lord of truth, ascend;
  For lo! Thou seekest such to worship Thee,
  Who weigh with reason's pure integrity
What purports to be thine, lest they offend.

But without Faith shall Reason like a ghost
  Sigh for the wholesome body of the truth
    Nor be appeased till in blind ways uncouth
Wide-wandering she is found and freed at length,
  As was Alcestis from that iron coast,
    By Hercules rejoicing in his strength.

## THE ADVENT

His awfulness is cast upon the night,
  His glory on the threshold of the morn,
  His beauty to the home of Truth is borne,
His joy to enrich the sorrowing takes flight;
And narrowed to a point His Godhead's might
  Is bare and pure and to the sense forlorn,
  In its first motions seen, a child new-born,
Gently assuming power, enforcing right.

He walketh with the outcast by the way,
  With every new oppression He is wronged,
    And all the overburdened hear His sighs.
O majesty of heaven, angel-thronged,
  Art Thou so well concealed? Ah! rather say
    This is Thyself, and all but this disguise.

## GALILEE

At night He seeks the mountain solitude,
  Bringing the nature He has made His own
  Under the eye of heaven apart, alone
To knowledge of its true beatitude,
And steeling to a firm and constant mood
  The pensive heart of man. There it is shown
  What it must dare, what suffer, how atone
For false delights, and triumph in all good.

Descending then, and more within the scene
  From meditation's trance, He looks above,
    And sees the sky changing at morning-break,
As change His thoughts from holiness to love,
  Walking beside the stillness of the lake,
    And in His eyes the heavens are not clean.

## MARY OF BETHANY

*By the Kedron.*

If heart-beats were a language I would choose
  Some names for thee, but now I must be dumb,
  For to thy rightful praise I cannot come,
With words that are devised for other use,
And their great offers I must still refuse.
  Yea, rather bid the cloud-fed Kedron hum
  And lisp and murmur what I cannot sum,
Than in vain titles thy dominion lose;
Whose looks are judgments. Day and Night attend
  Thy countenance, my King; as thine eyes bend,
    Things slighted grow most dear; things dearly prized,
And thoughts familiar to the soul grow strange,
  And darkened by thy presence seem to change
    Their aspect, and be easily despised.

## INCARNATION

PURE goodness is a balmy breath that blows
  A promise through the world from east to west;
  And now a babe upon its mother's breast
Whose innocence doth holiness enclose;
A child who in his breathings of repose
  Still in his Father's bosom seems to rest;
  A youth awaking to a world oppprest
Whose patience with indignant passion glows;
Till perfect Man the kingship over men
  Shall claim resistless; but no king discrown.
    Noiseless the passage of his sovereignty
Over the vacant depths of thought, as when
  Beam upon beam of morning trembles down
    Between two islets of the southern sea.

## DESCENT

(3 Sonnets)

I

Down through the ranks of men, past joy, past ease,
  Past groaning labour bent beneath the weight
  Of the world's dainty leisure and proud state,
He passes, step by step through dark degrees;
Past fellowship, past succour, past release;
  To that low ground where want doth meditate
  Darkly of God and man, accepting fate,
Or cursing it, where judgments never cease
That are for others' trespass: there He dwells;
  And to Religion and to Virtue tells
    The truth profane, that this infected air
Is the miasma of their righteousness,
  The effluence of the wisdom they profess,
    The Amen to each long complacent prayer.

II

Man must himself his accusation write
  Of enmity to God, by One alone
  Humanly felt, and yet divinely known;
Known to far-seeing patience infinite,
But in His low estate and mortal plight
  Breathed and embosomed with strong sighs of grief,
  Far-echoing through the olive's shuddering leaf,
In the affrighted stillness of the night.
Still downward through the man-soul's vast domain,
  Wherein no line or limit severeth
    God's peace from sorrow's gulf profound, he goes:
Still measuring evil with the wand of pain;
  Till earth's tumultuous cries no more oppose
    His silence, and the dead report His death.

III

Herald of peace and truth, what quest is thine
  Within this shadow immense where never shone
  Till now God's comfort, Light:—within the unknown
Vast concave that completes the sphere divine?
Ye spirits who grow more sad or move malign
  With the star-circuits, He whom love alone
  And goodness shorn of other power and throne,
Saved not from woe, visits your sad confine.
What purposing, our servile spirits and rude
  Perceive not, and angelic wit may miss,
    But downward as on earth His path intends,
By eyes of death encountered and pursued,
  Till in the lowest gloom of that abyss
    He turns, and looks above, and reascends.

## THE GARDEN

When from the future like a night-wind blows
  The menace of desertion, when the shame,
  And weakness of the alien mortal frame,
Afflict Him and His righteous will oppose,
Then must His Father's spirit all earthly foes,
  Fears, longings, loathings, with His searching flame,
  Thrust from the heart to keep that hour from blame,
Whose shadow o'er the silent garden grows,
Though in the stress of that relentless power
The life drops stain His brow, 'tis for that hour;
Lest faulty nature should the mind attaint,
  Lest the tormented sense amid its throes
Possess the parchéd lips with murmurs faint,
  That must in triumph of forgiveness close.

## THE ASCENSION

SILENT the well-known winding path they take;
  A new illumination backward cast
  Upon their walks and wanderings in the past,
Leads them again beside the brook, the lake,
Upon the hill, at eve, or morning break,
  Or by the Temple-Court: to be held fast
  Each word, each scene, each vigil, to the last;
Pondered, recalled and treasured for His sake.

But now rejoice! Nothing can more offend
  The Prince of Peace; Death's arrow on the wing
    Fell harmless, as that furious javelin hurled
By Saul at David—who must yet be king!
  So musing they arrive, and see Him ascend,
    And as they see are changed and change the world.

## MARY OF MAGDALA

### A Sequence of Sonnets

### First Day

I

Look not for dawn; let the night blot the scene
  Where busy murderous men the Lord pursued,
Let not the golden morning intervene,
  Flatter their thoughts, and give them hardi-
    hood.
Darkness the judgment of the Lord recites,
  Let there be no more day, or let it be
A deeper gloom between the starry nights,
  Oh that I heard from heaven this great decree!
"Let the earth sit in shadow of this deed,
  And with the will of God no more contend."
What solace it would be in mourning weed
  To see this witness borne, and wait the end
Patient, whether it be for hours or years
  Till in the skies our Glory reappears.

II

Ye who from sin to greater sin with pride
  Advance, what will you do now this is done?
  Here you must pause; in this comparison
All other treason shall be faintly dyed,
And cruelty to mercy be allied,
  Losing its name; what glory can be won
  From shedding innocent blood now this has run,
And from red earth to Heaven so loudly cried?

Each must recount his share in this great woe,
  If you would still be boasters,—"I did this"—
    "I that"—"I bore false witness"—"Say you so?
I brought the robe"—"I smote him"—"I did more,
  These fingers twisted him the crown he wore;
    But where is he that hailed him with a kiss?"

## Second Day

### I

Thy life comes back in day's continuance,
  And in the sense of being dwells unsought,
  And in the intercourse of thought with thought;
There is no circumstance or shift of chance
But thee remembers and with thee doth glance;
  Thou with the texture of our life enwrought
  Remainest: this a few sad hours have taught,
And the slow passage of one day's advance.

Art thou not present now within the scene?
  The door half open waits for thy footfall,
Strangers we welcome, but 'tis thee we mean;
  Thou comest with the sunbeam on the wall,
And with the plane's great shadow on the grass,
For there the children stood to see thee pass.

II

But here and there a word I can array
  Of his deep doctrine for another's need,
  But for myself my wants and miseries read
His wisdom in their own untutored way,
More readily than sinless angels may,
  Who look from sphere to sphere with burning
    eyes;
  But one that is forgiven, though else unwise,
Holds the pure truth hid in her heart alway.

That warden of the beam, proud adamant,
  The pearl within the closed teeth of the shell
  Topaz and beryl where the moonbeams dwell,
The chrysolite that throws sun-fire aslant
Are not more faithful to the light they bear
Than is my heart, which else holds nothing fair.

III

Thy life was still a gift, where'er thou art
  Thou must be giving. Oh that of thy store
  We might be still partakers evermore,
Still in thy destiny to bear a part!
We would not ask if that were life or death,
  There is more room for thee where sorrows dwell,
  And were it Tophet thou art capable
To give its shadows being with thy breath.

Thy holiness we sinners do not dread
  That when it speaks is love; each vile offence
    Melts in that double beam to innocence.
Yea; thee and only thee we will pursue,
  To hear whose voice the angels softly tread,
    For with a word thou makest all things new.

## Third Day

### I

Spices I bear, rose incense, balm and myrrh,
  Cassia and golden balms preservative,
  And Indian flowers with virtues that outlive
Their beauty and what else may grace confer
On the last rites that hands can minister.
  How small a part of us will then survive
  When to ourselves we dwindle, and derive
No strength from Thee while day and night
    recur!

Then we descend into the world again,
  To hear the clamours and joint turbulence
    Of priestly bigotry and Roman power;
With petty cares dulling the soul intense;
  Daring to live and see the rose in bloom
    And feel the sun, while Thou art in the
      tomb.

II

The dove coos and the advent of the day
  Touches the cloud and robs the moon of light,
And as I pause upon my doubtful way
  How peacefully the dawn puts by the night,
And shows the half-budded leaves and flowering grass
  As though no change had jarred the world, but lo!
Between the cross and sepulchure I pass,
  And what has been, and what must be I know.
Ah, foolish hope against dread certainty
  That came upon me in the hours of sleep!
Still looking forth for what can never be!
  The day may wait, the night may watch and weep,
He is not found within our boundaries,
  No nearer can he come than stars and skies.

III

*"Go to My brethren."*

"Who can withhold Him? Who can bid Him pause?
Or set a bound where He intends a way?
Or the advancement of His Kingdom stay?
Who to Himself the whole creation draws
And bends the powers of ill to His just cause?
O ransomed earth! O Spring whose glad array
From the beginning prophesied this day,
Love's miracles are now our only laws!"

So Mary triumphed, and sprang along the sward,
Stooped to the flower, and reached up to the tree;
Then as wind-wafted faced that group forlorn,
Holding the white branch of a flowering thorn,
And breathless as the joy of infancy,
Stammered the rapture: "I have seen the Lord!"

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